

THE
MASSACHUSETTS
Missionary Magazine,

FOR JANUARY, 1804.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER

*From Gaïfer, in London, to Aly Ben Hayton, his friend
in Constantinople ; giving an account of the wonder-
ful work of God upon his soul.*

DEAR HAYTON,

YOU cannot be ignorant that the imperfect, though
awakening information given me of the christian re-
ligion, by an English slave, under captivity to our bigoted Ma-
hometan neighbour, Abdala, put me upon a restless desire of a
farther knowledge therein. This, I was convinced, could not
be obtained in my present unhappy situation, being in a country
where it is death to give the least suspicion of favouring the
christian profession, where every eye and every ear were danger-
ous watchers over all my behaviour : therefore it was with all
the caution necessary to so hazardous an attempt, I happily got
on board the Expedition, bound from Constantinople to London.

When I came to England, as soon as I had opportunity of
making my observations, I found that the christian religion was
in general professed throughout this kingdom. But notwith-
standing the purity it enjoins, it appeared that the generality of
its professors were very loose in their morals, profane in their
discourse, and debauched in their lives. I also found that the
professors of christianity were divided into many religious sects,
and, what is much to be deplored, each carry their opposition,
for the most part, against the other to that height of inveteracy,
as though they worshipped not the same God.

This put me upon further inquiry into the principles of the
christian religion ; a task difficult enough for a stranger to un-
dertake, who had then but a small acquaintance with the Eng-
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lish tongue. But that impediment was removed in a shorter time than was expected, by the assistance of a humane, sober gentleman, whose profession was to teach the languages, and instruct his pupils in the religion of his country. He took much pains in teaching me both ; and furnished me with such books as were necessary, particularly that which they call the Bible, which is to the Christians what the Alcoran is to the Mahometans. This is their perfect rule of faith, and contains a full declaration of the will of God, with a full account of future rewards and punishments for the good and evil.

As I read these sacred pages with an unprejudiced mind, and a desire of information, I soon found how mistaken I had been concerning the terms of man's acceptance with God, and of his final salvation ; namely, that it is not by works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost ; and that by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it (even faith) is the gift of God. I clearly saw, according to this book ; that to him that could not work, previous to his justification, but believeth on Jesus Christ, his righteousness, being received by faith, is imputed to him for justification. I saw also both the nature and extent of the moral law ; the fall of man by the transgression of Adam, our general root and representative ; but the first covenant being broken, man was utterly unable to obtain salvation thereby ; and that Jesus Christ, the second Adam, came into the world to be the Saviour and living head of all that believe in him : For them he fulfilled the law ; for them he satisfied divine justice ; and that the only way to eternal life, was by receiving his righteousness, which is imputed to all them that believe.

When I began to understand something of the differences amongst the various professors of christianity, I found them all remote from the tenor of scripture ; that all within the circle of my acquaintance, seemed totally to neglect those doctrines the holy scriptures made absolutely necessary to salvation, and warmly to contend for forms and modes, and whatever the Bible was quite silent about, and laid no stress upon. But what I wondered at most of all, was, that those who are called Clergymen, and are by the laws of their country, separated from the rest of the people to teach the principles and practice of their holy religion, are, for the most part, the greatest strangers to the essence of the gospel. As for their lives, they are as vain, trifling, and irreligious as any others. They frequent public theatres, balls and assemblies ; in short they are a common reproach, and the very hindrance of others' repentance ; but still they call themselves the ministers of the gospel, the Ambassadors of Jesus Christ ; and expect

expect to be revered of all men, for being the followers of his humility, his contempt of the world and purity of life.

Upon the whole I could form no other judgment of the divinity of the gospel from the deportment of the bulk of its professors, and especially of its teachers, than that it was a cunning fable, devised only to aggrandize a set of men that call themselves the Clergy. Their public exhortations faintly recommend a conduct of life, such as they themselves are mostly strangers to; though it be no more than a little dry heathen morality. From all this I could see them in no other light than the very enemies to the cross of Christ, the greatest opposers of true Christianity, and deceivers of the people.

Thus, my dear Hayton, instead of the real happiness I promised myself in the society of Christians, and the glorious privileges of their religion so recommended and adorned by that poor exiled slave, I met with very little else here in this christian land (so called) but infidelity and profaneness; which sore disappointment hardened my heart against all religion whatever. What could I then conclude, but that the bible was a cheat, and their religion a craft? And I had well nigh resolved to loose the reins of my passion, and follow the multitude to do evil.

But one Sabbath evening (and let me not forget that day!) as I was taking a solitary walk, musing on these things, I passed by a very crowded assembly of people. Led, as I thought by curiosity, I entered the place with no little contempt in my heart. But, O my dear Hayton, how shall I describe the emotions I felt, whilst joy sat upon the countenances of those about me. The solemnity of the place, and the awful behaviour of the assembly was such as I had never seen before; and what struck me with wonder and deep attention, one spirit seemed to animate the whole body; and what one man offered up in prayer, the rest made joint request to God for.

O what I felt when I heard the King of Kings addressed in these words! "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously upon the word of truth, meekness and righteousness; Thine arrows are very sharp in the heart of the King's enemies." I trembled; and though I doubted if I had not better fly away, I could not, I dared not leave the awful place. Prayer being ended, from the sacred oracles, the man of God read these words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." He shewed both the holiness of that God with whom we have to do; the great design of redemption by Christ; the depravity of our souls, and the nature of that happiness which is set before us; the absolute necessity of being born again, in order to obtain a present pardon, and persevere to future salvation. He not only proved

the necessity of regeneration from these, and many other substantial arguments, but there was something like a judgment seat set up in my own conscience. I was by some power, more than human, indicted, arraigned, proved guilty, and condemned. The sinful actions of my life were now laid open before me : I was compelled to assent to what I never knew before, namely, that all my sinful actions proceeded from a corrupt fountain, a nature universally depraved and polluted. Each sentence he spake came with authority and conviction to my heart, especially such as these : " Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world (even they that have not the written law) become guilty before God. No man can redeem his brother, nor give unto God a ransom for him. He that believeth on Jesus Christ shall be saved ; and he that believeth not shall be damned." Now it was that my heart failed within me ! I groaned in spirit ! I cried, I am undone ! My sins are gone over my head. The remembrance of them is grievous, and the burden of them is intolerable.

When all was ended, I strove with all my might to conceal the confusion of my mind from those happier souls I was surrounded with, but some of them perceived my concern ; and one said to me, with tears in his eyes, " The Saviour of sinners have mercy on thee and reveal himself to thy soul !" But oh, my load was great, I returned with a heavy heart.

When I entered my closet, I threw myself prostrate on the ground, and attempted to pray ; but it was long before I could speak a word.

After some time I rose from the ground, but in great distraction of mind. Sometimes I had thoughts of going in search of the preacher, in hopes of finding relief from him ; but this seemed impracticable, it being now late in the evening ; and besides I knew not where to seek him ; Then I condemned myself for not inquiring where he lived, and looked upon this neglect as a bad omen. It now darted into my mind, whether or no the minister I heard was really a man of like passions with others, or an angel sent from God.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me, I cast my eyes upon my quite neglected bible, which I had before carelessly thrown aside, finding it so little regarded by those called Christians. I read, and pondered, and read on, but alas ! every line seemed to militate against me ; and instead of ministering relief, to increase my torment. I closed the book, and paused, then opened it again, and found these words, " The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me ; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord ; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." This scripture, for a moment, conveyed some light and comfort to me in my distress.

I saw

I saw my case was not as I supposed, peculiar to myself. I said, surely this man has been in like trouble of soul, and has felt the pains of hell too; and yet the Lord graciously delivered him out of all.

[To be continued.]

RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE.

[Continued from No. 7.]

ON THE NEW YEAR, 1804.

Clerus. **A** GREEABLY to intimation, at the last conference,* our present subject is *The New Year*.

Lucinda. No subject, Sir, can be more pertinent or useful; for mortals are passing away like the rapid years we experience, which come and go in the most imperceptible manner.

Eusebia. I am glad the subject is introduced, because it directly urges us to measure our days, and apply our hearts to wisdom.

Amelia. We cordially approve the topic; and it is hoped we shall attend to it with correspondent reflections. For why shall we forget God, because he always remembers us! His mercies are constant.

Clerus. It affords me the highest pleasure and encouragement to find that the subject meets your united approbation. Let us then indulge the most unreserved freedom in our reflections and remarks.

Leonora. We hope, Sir, you will guide our youthful minds; for though the subject is practical it requires information and experience to handle it with advantage.

Clerus. We shall none of us, it is presumed, be averse from freedom; for without it, the advantage of the conference is lost.

The first object of reflection at the introduction of the New Year is the shortness of time. Alas! is another year gone! How imperceptibly does life glide away! Short was the life of man, compared with his future destination, even when he lived nearly a thousand years. It was then but a mere point. What then is it now? To impress our inattentive minds, therefore, with the rapidity and shortness of human life, inspiration compares it with the haste of a post, the swiftness of an eagle, the sudden departure of the morning vapour, with the scanty recollection of a dream, with a hand's breadth and other objects of the most fleeting and transitory nature. While the heavens and the earth

* The conference here alluded to came too late for the last number, and is omitted until our next, to make room for the following on the New Year.

earth continue uniformly the same, numerous generations of men have successively entered and left the stage of human life. The Fathers where are they? and the prophets do they live for ever? Where are the powerful kings and nations that lately filled the world with fame? and what will soon be the fate of eight hundred millions of men now on the earth? In short, man is not only born to die, but he seems to be born in the arms of death. Such is the constitution of man that we begin to die when we begin to live. "He cometh up like a flower and is cut down."

Theophilus. I have often been deeply impressed with the reflections of Job on this subject. "My days, says he, are swifter than a weaver's shuttle. The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more. Thine eyes are upon me and I am not." Surely he considered death as standing at the door of life; or rather he considered life as the opening grave.

Eugenius. That life is short we need not attempt to prove. The dying testimony of millions is decisive, but is not life as precarious as it is short? Who knows that he shall continue another year, or even another hour? Alas, when we go out, we know not that we shall return: When we close our eyes to sleep we know not that we shall awake till roused by the trump of God, at the final consummation.

Leonora. I have often contemplated the precarious and uncertain tenure of life; and before I had liberty to consider myself the subject of grace, my sleep was frequently but a dismal dream about destruction. I was afraid to sleep and to wake; afraid to die and even to live a single moment. O how dangerous to be constantly held by the injured and angry Jehovah over the flaming pit! It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed. We deserve nothing but destruction; and who shall not adore his patience?

Clerus. If life, therefore, is but a little pivot, or brittle thread on which depends the eternal state of man, how interesting to improve it! Shall we redeem it? Or, like the simple pilgrim, who waited on the margin of the stream for all the water to pass by, that he might travel dry shod; shall we spend our hasty days in the most criminal indolence? Were we able to arrest the arm of death at pleasure, or to turn up the glass of life, the folly and wickedness of delays would not appear so egregious. But, as it is appointed unto all men once to die, so death will make no delay, nor suffer any one to pass beyond his limits. The king and peasant, the parent and child, must yield to the summons; for there is no discharge in that war, nor a moment's respite after the appointed end of probation.

Lucinda. Since human life is so short and precarious; since we have trifled away so great a portion of it, and have the most interesting

interesting business to effect, please to inform us how we can redeem it.

Clerus. To redeem time, strictly speaking, is impossible ; for not a moment of past time can be recalled. The days and years which are past will never return. To realize, therefore, the value of present time, by faithfully improving it, in consequence of reflecting on what we have lost, is the only method to redeem it.

Theophilus. If Titus, the Pagan General, at the close of the day during which he had performed no signal exploit, was impelled to say, "Alas, I have lost a day ;" how ought christians to feel who have lost so many years !

Clerus. We ought to blush, to feel humble and penitent ; and to double our diligence : for we have much to do in a little time. Who of us has not reason to be ashamed of past neglect, and to make all possible exertions for the future ?

Leonora. I have often wished to repeat my life from the cradle to the present time, for the sake of mending it.

Theodore. We little think what we say, while talking in this manner. For the same person would lead the same life, without variation.

Leonora. You misapprehend me, Theodore, I don't wish to repeat my eighteen years of vanity and dissipation ; but wish, if possible, to obliterate the folly and guilt of childhood and youth.

Lucinda. That indeed, Leonora, you wish, like other good girls, that you had been the subject of piety from your infancy ; but you cannot desire to reverse the course of things and return to the cradle.

Leonora. No : I wish to bewail and repent my graceless days, since I cannot deface my guilt, and for the future to live like a devout christian.

Clerus. The most shining christians will do no more ; and no one is at liberty to do less. God has safely conducted us through the varying scenes of life, to the commencement of another year, that we may honor him with the advantages he confers.

Leonora. We feel the weight of your observation relative to the redemption of time : but how shall we redeem it ?

Clerus. You ask a question, Leonora, which cannot be answered. We can describe duty, and urge it upon you ; but we cannot tell you *how* to perform it any more than we can tell you *how* to be hungry or thirsty while destitute of inclination and appetite. The *manner* of duty is the experimental secret which pertains to *those only* who love to do their duty. Taste then and see that the Lord is gracious, and you will know *how* to redeem your time and *how* to perform every other duty. The manner of duty is learned by the performance of duty. Experience is the best teacher.

Leonora.

Leonora. I understand you, Sir; and if I were not more or less inclined to plead unwillingness for an excuse, the question would not have been asked. For it is manifest that we have reason and bodily strength to do all that God requires.

Theophilus. Yes, "the willing mind is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." Nothing is wanting but dutiful desires to improve all the blessings of the new year. If we love God we shall keep his commands, and they will not be grievous, but delightful. Christ's yoke will be easy and his burden light and pleasant.

Leonora. But though the mode of the mind's operations cannot be described, is it not possible to give us a few rules to direct our conduct?

Clerus. Yes, *Leonora*, it can easily be done, and I thank you for the seasonable suggestion. For unless our lives are wisely regulated, we imperceptibly lose our precious hours.

Leonora. We will then thank you, Sir, to furnish a few necessary rules.

Clerus. 1. To redeem time we must frequently contemplate the mercy of God in granting us a probationary state. Nothing but the mere grace of God prevents our immediate ruin; for we as really deserve his wrath as the reprobated spirits. The subject of God's grace tends to excite action.

2. To redeem time we must contemplate the price of it. Neither with silver and gold, nor the merit of all creation was the term of probation secured for guilty men; but by the blood of Christ. The sacrifice which Christ made is inestimably precious; and while we consider it in a moral view, and not in the light of pecuniary satisfaction, like the Antinomians, who love Christ on selfish principles, let it elevate our souls to adore God for the harmony of his justice and mercy in redemption. Who by searching can find out God! For as the damnation of the impenitent does not tarnish his mercy; so the salvation of the penitent does not tarnish his justice. In the face of Christ justice and mercy harmonize in the most glorious manner. God is as merciful as his Son, and Christ is as just as his Father; for they are one, though personally distinct.

3. To redeem time we must, with answerable exertions, remember that the weight of eternal blessedness depends upon faithfully improving it. And what, alas, have we to expect but endless destruction if we misimprove it? He who loses time, loses all.

4. To redeem time we must daily reflect on the wisdom of the happy few who have improved it: and on the folly of the wretched multitude who have misimproved it. God has given us the history

history of preceding generations to impress our minds with the importance of being seasonably prepared for eternity.

5. To redeem time, we must choose good company and avoid wicked company. For we have no reason to expect spiritual advantage from Christ's enemies. If we love the company and employment of those who have no communion with Christ, we have reason to fear the loss of time, and the loss of our souls. How can two walk together except they be agreed? And who can redeem his time while he loves the company of triflers?

6. To redeem time, we must love the Bible, the closet, the Sabbath and the ordinances of God's house. These will presently inform the assembled universe, whether we carefully improve our fleeting moments. For all good men love reading, meditation, prayer and all the ordinances of the sanctuary and the sabbath.

7. In one word, to redeem time we must be diligent to perform the duty of every day within the limits of the day. There are duties appropriate to every day. As the attentive trader does not postpone the entry which ought to be made this moment to some future hour; so the diligent christian keeps pace with time. As delay is the most hostile to duty, his faithful heart is hostile to delay; and he does not sleep without completing the register of the day, and striking a balance in the name of Christ his surety. He makes his calculations every day for the final judgment when the secrets of all hearts will be revealed.

Leonora. You have my cordial thanks, Sir, for these timely hints, and I hope they will prove the means of a well regulated life. Those who are destitute of the rules of living, are destitute of time. The habit of conscientious regularity is the precious discriminating habit of christians.

Clerus. It surely is: and irregular christianity is the greatest of solecisms. The christian is a man of regularity, whose business is so nicely arranged, that he has sufficient time for the performance of every duty. His diet, his hours of sleep and exercise, and all other concerns are under the control of wisdom and discretion; for he lives to do good to others, to honor God, and enjoy him for ever. He is like the rising light that shines brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

Sophia. I am pleased with the serious reflections which have been made; they are pertinent and useful; but if consistent to grant it, I desire liberty for the sake of information to deviate a little from the present train of thought.

Clerus. You have full liberty to give the conversation any direction which comports with the original design.

Sophia. While at church yesterday, attending to the New Year's sermon, where I saw many seats vacated by death, in the course of twelve months, I was led to inquire why death is the lot of man?

Theodore. Is it not appointed unto all men once to die ?

Sophia. Yes, my brother, but what reasons can be assigned for the appointment ?

Clerus. 1. It is the lot of man to die because he is a sinner and deserves death.

2. It is the lot of man to die, because God chooses to express his disapprobation of sin by death, in the most public manner. Temporal death is an emblem of the wages of sin, which is eternal death.

3. Death is the lot of man, because, considering the dispensation of grace, sinners need the plain instruction which it affords. What sinner does not need to be frequently and deeply impressed with the evil nature of sin ; the great danger of sin ; the inestimable value of time ; and the vanity of the world ? In these and other respects, death is an able teacher.

4. Death is the lot of man, because it gives God's children the best opportunity to express their faith in the veracity of his promise of futurity. O what a privilege for God's children to bear testimony to his faithfulness by dying ! " For me to live is Christ ; but to die great gain ;" is a heavenly testimony. What good man is not willing to die for the sake of making it ! O death where is thy sting ! O grave where is thy victory ! Surely it is a privilege to die.

5. Death is the lot of man, considering the extensive design of Providence, because man needs the room of man. Neither Adam's house, nor Adam's world is large enough for all his family at once. Like the passing current in the channel, so the generations of men are constantly going and coming. God intends that the gospel shall be offered to more generations than the world can contain at any one time. Death is therefore his officer to remove old tenants for the introduction of new ones.

In short, there would be no such thing as living in the world, if we may so speak, were it not for death. What a world, if all men were exempt from death !

Sophia. I am pleased with many of your remarks : but is death a good thing ?

Clerus. Judge for yourselves. Death is an evil in itself ; but it is manifestly beneficial in its connections and final consequences. God will have nothing in his system which does not answer a good end.

Delia. The observations which have been made, in consequence of Sophia's freedom, emboldens me to digress in a similar manner.

Clerus. If your question correspond with Sophia's we shall not consider it a digression ; for we wish to contemplate those objects which are congenial with our subject.

Delia.

Delia. Let me then ask, why it is the lot of man to stand before the judgment seat ?

Clerus. We have no objections to the question ; but rather approve of it.

1. Then ; We must all appear before the judgment seat to know ourselves. Men are strangely ignorant of themselves. They know but little of their own hearts. The most of our sins we never noticed ; and many which were noticed at the time of commission are now forgotten. Who knows his own character ? Alas, the heart is deceitful above all things ! Who can know it ? “ I the Lord search the heart.” But when will God display the heart of man to himself ? At the Great Day. Then the secrets of man’s heart will be revealed ; and he will see himself clearly.

2. We must attend the solemnities of the final judgment to ascertain the character of each other. As we know but little of ourselves, so we know but a little of each other. Many, we have reason to fear, now pass for christians who are not worthy of the name ; and some, it is probable, are styled sinners who are christians. We cannot accurately discriminate ; but the day of judgment will fully reveal the hearts and characters of men to each other. Then we shall know each other’s motives.

3. We must attend the solemnities of the final judgment to ascertain more fully the character of God. It is God’s manifest design to display his perfections at the consummation in the most ample manner. Then every eye shall see him : then also, every mouth will be stopped, and all the world will become guilty before God.

In one word ; all men must stand before the bar of God to behold his glory ; for God will make the greatest manifestation of his perfections, when the minds and hearts of both friends and enemies will be prepared to receive the deepest impression.

Amelia. These things are doubtless according to truth. How interesting then to deserve life for the honor of God ? Can we any of us desire another year to be spent in self-gratification ? God forbid. My dear young friends, let the shortness of life ; let the uncertainty of life ; let the preciousness of life ; the inestimable advantages of redeeming time ; and the inestimable disadvantages of losing it, excite us at once to enter on the new year like christians.

Clerus. Your advice, Amelia, is approved. For we were made to be the Lord’s both in life and death, in time and eternity. Now is the accepted time ; but before the close of the year some of us will probably be numbered with the dead.

[To be continued.]

EXTRACT

EXTRACT FROM THE BRITISH SPY.

YOU complain, my dear S*****, that although I have been resident in Richmond upwards of six months, you have heard nothing of me since my arrival. The truth is, that I have suspended writing until a more intimate acquaintance with the people and their country, should furnish me with materials for a correspondence. Having now collected those materials, the apology ceases, and the correspondence begins. But first a word of myself.

I still continue to wear the mask, and most willingly exchange the attentions which would be paid to my rank, for the superior and exquisite pleasure of inspecting this country and this people, without attracting to myself a single eye of curiosity, or awakening a shade of suspicion. Under my assumed name, I gain an admittance, close enough to trace at leisure, every line of the American character; while the plainness, or rather humility of my appearance, my manners and conversation, puts no one on his guard, but enables me to take a portrait of nature, as it were, asleep and naked. Besides, there is something of innocent roguery in the masquerade which I am playing, that suits very well with the sportiveness of my temper. To fit and decoy the human heart from behind all its disguises; to watch the capricious evolutions of unrestrained nature, frisking, curvetting and gambolling at her ease, with the curtain of ceremony drawn up to the very sky; O! it is delightful!

You are perhaps surprised at my speaking of the attentions which would be paid, in this country, to my rank. You will suppose then I have forgotten where I am; no such thing. I remember well enough that I am in Virginia: that state which, of all the rest, plumes herself most highly on the democratic spirit of her principles. Her political principles are, indeed, democratic enough in all conscience. Rights and privileges, as regulated by the constitution of the state, belong in an equal degree to all the citizens; and Peter Pindar's remark is perfectly true of the people of this country, that "every blackguard scoundrel is a king." Nevertheless, there exists in Virginia a species of local rank, from which no country can, I presume, be entirely free. I mean that kind of rank which arises from the different degrees of wealth and of intellectual refinement. These must introduce a style of living and conversation, the former of which a poor man cannot attain, while an ignorant one would be incapable of enjoying the latter. It seems to me, that from these causes, wherever

ever they may exist, circles of society, strongly discriminated, must inevitably result. And one of these causes exists in full force in Virginia, for, however they may vaunt of equal liberty in church and state, they have but little to boast on the subject of equal property. Indeed there is no country, I believe, where property is more unequally distributed than in Virginia. This inequality struck me with peculiar force, in riding through the lower countries on the Potowmack. Here and there a stately aristocratic palace, with all its appurtenances, strikes the view: While all around for many miles, no other buildings are to be seen, but the little smoky huts and log cabins of poor, laborious, ignorant tenants. And what is very ridiculous, these tenants, while they approach the great house, cap in hand, with all the fearful, trembling submission of the lowliest, feudal vassals, boast, to their court house yards, with obstreperous exultation, they live in a land of freemen, a land of equal liberty and equal rights. Whether this debasing sense of inferiority which I have mentioned, is but a remnant of the colonial character, or whether it be that it is natural for poverty and impotence to look up with veneration to wealth and property and rank, I cannot decide. For my own part, however, I have ascribed it to the latter cause; and I have been in a degree confirmed in the opinion, by observing the attentions which were paid, by the most genteel people here, to ——— the son of Lord ———. You know the circumstances in which his lordship left Virginia; that so far from being popular, he carried with him the deepest execrations of these people. Even now his name is seldom mentioned here, but in connection with terms of abhorrence or contempt. Aware of this, and believing it impossible that ——— was indebted to his father for all the parade of respect which was shewn to him, I sought in his own personal accomplishments a solution of the phenomena. But I sought in vain. Without one solitary ray of native genius, without one adventitious beam of science, without any of those traits of soft benevolence which are so universally captivating, I found his mind dark and benighted, his manners bold, forward and assuming, and his whole character evidently inflated with the consideration that he was the son of a lord. His deportment was so evidently dictated by this consideration, and he regarded the Virginians so palpably in the humiliating light of inferior plebeians, that I have often wondered how such a man, and the son too of so unpopular a father, escaped from this country without personal injury, or at least personal insult. I am now persuaded that this impunity and the great respect which was paid to him resulted solely from his noble descent, and was nothing more than the tribute which man pays either to imaginary or real superiority.

On

On this occasion, I stated my surprise to a young Virginian, who happened to be one of the democratic party. He, however, did not choose to admit the statement; but asserted that whatever respect had been shewn to ——— proceeded solely from the federalists: and that it was an unguarded ebullition of their private attachment to monarchy and its appendages. I then stated the subject to a very sensible gentleman, whom I knew to belong to the federal phalanx. Not willing to degrade his party, by admitting that they would prostrate themselves before the empty shadow of nobility, he alleged that nothing had been manifested towards young ——— beyond the hospitality which was due to a genteel stranger; and that if there had been any thing of parade on his account, it was attributable only to the ladies, who had merely exercised their wonted privilege of coquetting with a fine young fellow. But notwithstanding all this, it was easy to discern, in the look, the voice and whole manner with which gentlemen as well as ladies of both parties saluted and accosted young ———, a sacred spirit of respectful diffidence, a species of silent reverential abasement which could not have been excited by his personal qualities, and must have been homage to his rank. Judge then whether I have not just reason to apprehend, that on the annunciation of my real name, the curtain of ceremony would fall, and nature would cease to play her pranks before me.

Richmond is built, as you will remember, on the north side of James River, and at the head of the tide water. There is a manuscript in this state, which relates a curious anecdote concerning the origin of this town. The land hereabout was owned by Col. William Bird. This gentleman, with the former proprietor of the town at the head of tide water on Appomattox river, was appointed, it seems, to run the line between Virginia and North Carolina. The operation was a most tremendous one; for, in the execution of it, they had to penetrate and pass quite through the great dismal swamp. It would be almost impossible to give you a just conception of the horrors of this enterprise. Imagine to yourself an immense morass, thirty or forty miles in diameter: its soil a black deep mire, covered with a stupendous forest of juniper and cypress trees, whose luxuriant branches, interwoven throughout, intercept the beams of the sun and teach day to counterfeit the night. The forest, which, until that time, perhaps the human foot had never violated, had become the secure retreat of ten thousand beasts of prey. The adventurers, therefore, beside the almost endless labour of falling trees, in a proper direction to form a footway throughout, moved, amid perpetual terrors, and each night had to sleep *en militaire* upon their arms, surrounded with the deafening sound chilling yell of those hunger smitten

smitten lords of the desert. It was one night as they lay in the midst of scenes like those, that Hope, that never failing friend of man, paid them a consoling visit, and sketched in brilliant prospect the plains of Richmond and Petersburg.

Richmond occupies a very picturesque and most beautiful situation. I have never met with such an assemblage of striking and interesting objects. The town, dispersed over hills of various shades; the river, descending from west to east, and obstructed by a multitude of small islands, clumps of trees and myriads of rocks, among which it rumbles, foams and roars, consisting of what are called the falls; the same river at the lower end of the town, bending at right angles to the south, and winding reluctantly off for many miles in that direction, its polished surface caught here and there by the eye, but more generally covered from the view by trees, among which the white sails of approaching and departing vessels exhibit a curious and interesting appearance; Then again on the opposite side, the little town of Manchester, built on a hill which sloping gently to the river, opens the whole town to the view, interspersed as it is with vigorous and flourishing poplars, and surrounded to a great distance by green plains and stately woods; all these objects falling at once under the eye, constitute by far the most finely varied and most animated landscape that I have ever seen. A mountain, like the blue ridge, in the western horizon, and the rich tint with which the hand of a Pennsylvania farmer would paint the adjacent fields, would make the most enchanting spot that ever Damascus is described to be. I will endeavour to procure for you a perspective view of Richmond with the embellishment of fancy which I have just mentioned, and you will do me the honor to give it a place in your pavillion.

Adieu for the present, my dear S*****—May the perpetual smiles of Heaven be yours.

To the EDITORS of the MASSACHUSETTS MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN we consider the great and important object of the gospel ministry, that it is designed to effect a reconciliation between the offended Sovereign of the universe, and his offending creature man, it is a matter of great importance that he who undertakes the mission, should have just views of the parties at variance, and of the medium of reconciliation. As there

there are some clothed with that sacred authority, who have not those claims to be received as God's ambassadors that could be wished, have we not reason to conclude that, in many instances, there is not that faithful and scrupulous inquiry into their qualifications by those whose business it is to invest them with sacred functions, which we should deem necessary our President should make into the qualifications of a person to negotiate the affairs of state? From whatever cause it may arise, whether from a want of regard to the interest of Christ in some, or that fear of man which bringeth a snare in others, it must be acknowledged that matters are not growing better, when we consider that those who are thus prematurely introduced into office are themselves to sit in council to clothe others with the like authority. From these considerations does it not appear necessary there should be some rule to guide ministers and christians in their conduct towards those who are invested with the office of a teacher, beside the decision of a council? And might it not therefore be useful should the following questions be answered in your Magazine.

1. Whether a minister can, consistently with that fidelity he owes, and that high responsibility he is under, to the Great Head of the church, give the right hand of fellowship to another, by exchanging with him, and inviting him to preach, without some personal acquaintance with him, and satisfying evidence (apart from, and independently of the decision of a council,*) that he is called of God, and friendly to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and the power of religion?

2. Whether a minister who exchanges with another does not by that act, approve of the choice his people have made in choosing him, and confirm them in their favourable opinion of his preaching and sentiments, however deficient or erroneous they may be?

An answer is requested.

* Are we any more bound to approve of what appears to us to be wrong, done by an ecclesiastical council, than if done by the deistical Thomas Paine and his adherents, although we may put that favourable and generous construction on their conduct, the circumstances of the case may admit?

MEM^{RS}. EDITORS,

THE doctrine of the saint's perseverance in grace; of his being finally happy, has long been considered as a scripture doctrine. This it is conceived has afforded comfort to numbers of God's children, in every age. A correspondent wishes a brief, but clear explanation of those words in Hebrews x. 29. which in the opinion of some, directly militate with the doctrine abovementioned.

GAMMA.

LETTERS

LETTERS ON SOLITARY DEVOTION.

[Continued from page 294.]

FROM *PASCAL* TO *JULIA*.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR JULIA;

THE third objection is as easily obviated as the others. It is said, that the goodness of God is so perfect, that it must be disposed to communicate without waiting to be asked; and that prayer implicitly denies this, which is therefore dishonourary to him. For an illustration of this idea we are referred to the imperfect goodness of men, particularly of parents; which, like that of Job, searches out the cause, which it knew not; is provident to supply before hand, wants which are not yet felt, fondly anticipating every need, and superceding entirely the necessity of begging. Hence it is inferred, that to admit the propriety of prayer, is to suppose God a grudging kind of giver; more reluctant to communicate to his needy creatures, than parents are to their children, or even some men to strangers. This objection like the other, is founded in mistake; both with respect to the goodness of God, and the nature of prayer. Properly contemplated, the goodness of God is entirely of a preventing nature. Providently it anticipates every want; it determines from eternity, therefore antecedently to every act of prayer, all those endless communications of good which it makes to creatures. It determines previously to prayer, to give the thing prayed for; and besides gives the heart to pray. Prayer is a desirable exercise. It is a great blessing to have a heart to pray. But this is given. The favour asked is given, as the fulfilment of a design previously formed. The person then who receives benefits in answer to prayer, is, in all respects a debtor; more so than he who receives the same favours without prayer. For the latter is deficient in the material advantage of having a praying heart. The scriptures repeatedly describe the goodness of God as altogether of this preventing nature, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." This prescience is impossible, but upon the ground of design. Of him, and to him, and through him are all things. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." These gifts are

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bestowed in design, anterior to prayer, not subsequent to it. "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." God's goodness is so superior to that of the most disinterested of men, that, in the comparison, they deserve not the character of good men. "Who is kind to the evil and to the unthankful, and sendeth rain on the unjust. And it shall come to pass, before they call I will answer. I am found of them that sought me not. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. We love him because he first loved us." Innumerable favours are bestowed by God unsought. Life and salvation are so. Sinners never properly ask for salvation antecedently to being the subjects of it. Grace, as an act of God, always precedes the desire of it as our act. Many blessings besides are bestowed in answer to prayer, but if the grace of a praying heart is his gift, the goodness exercised in bestowing these blessings, is no less preventing, unextorted, and free, than it is in bestowing without prayer. The only question then in this case really is, whether God has established a wise constitution, in making the duty of prayer precede the communication of certain favours. The objection does not prove, in any degree, the impropriety of this constitution; and sufficient reasons I trust have been already suggested in my last letter, to vindicate the wisdom of it. The other objection, that such reiterated and importunate begging as prayer, must be vexatious and troublesome to God rather than pleasing, is almost too-frivolous to be noticed. Just as if the divine Being could be incommoded by the filial homage of benevolent creatures. Unbelievers, by talking in this way, would lead us to conceive of God, as a certain kind of voluptuous Jupiter, who, like a Sultan in his seraglio, is too busily engaged, or too fond of indolent indulgence, to bear to be disturbed by a supplicating multitude. Their ideas are so constantly on the brink of Atheism, and they have such a friendship for Paganism, that one cannot bear them company long, without fancying himself on Mount Ida, or in the island of Cyprus, with the infamous gods of Grecian and Roman devotion. It is a foolish employment to be always setting up men of straw, and pulling them down again. One idea I will suggest to you, as we now happen to have fallen into company with your men of reason, that, unless we are downright atheists, they must admit the impossibility of acting the part of benevolence, and so if any real virtue without implied prayer. How can I rationally wish well to any of my fellow creatures, but in the spirit of prayer? If they are made well and happy there must be some cause of their weal and happiness. I cannot be that cause. I may be a secondary cause, or an instrumental agent, but not properly the cause. God alone
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can be. "Of him and to him, and through him are all things." Our ordinary salutations then, if we mean any thing by them, and to express them on the principle of theism, are of the nature of prayer, and every effort, which benevolence makes for the benefit of others, if made, without the mad temerity of atheism, must be in the spirit of prayer. Hence we find, in fact, the religious people of ancient and modern times, have generally expressed their ordinary salutations very much in the language of prayer.

You feel the importance of the subject before us too much to think me tedious, and will, I know, receive in the most candid manner, the imperfect hints of your friend and brother.

[*To be continued.*]

For the MASSACHUSETTS MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.

THE WOLF INIMICAL TO THE SHEEPFOLD;

Or, Men always have an interest in what they undertake.

IF a farmer were to see a wolf breaking into his sheepfold, what would be his feelings, and what his exertions? Such an event would awaken all his powers. He would first feel a sentiment of care for his flock. Next he would resolve to repulse and destroy the wolf. In order to this his thoughts would rapidly search after the most effectual and prompt means. He would in the most active manner arrange them, but with caution, lest precipitancy should frustrate its own object. The interest he has in the safety of his property, would whet his powers of invention, supply his heart with courage, and his arm with strength.

What is the reason of all this? It is plainly the affection he feels toward this part of his property. He values, and therefore would not lose it. His opposition is roused against the wolf, because he fears from him a destruction of what he holds dear. His attachment to his property, is the main spring of his opposition to the intruder, and excites him to hazard even his life for his sheep. Were it not for this attachment he would calmly see the wolf devour them all. And were he careless about his sheep, and strongly attached to the wolf as a valuable good, it would give him pleasure to see him devour the sheep. Interest governs all; "Aye, all those, who make money their idol: but there are those, who are not governed by interest. How many donations are made to the missionary society, without any regard to interest."

But,

But, if these benefactors have no interest in the success of the designs of this society, they are perfectly careless about that success. They therefore, make their donations to enable the society to obtain something, which they care nothing about, for if they desire to have it obtained, it is because they value it, and if they value it, they feel an interest in it ; and this apprehended interest is the active principle which influences them to give. Would they bestow their charity, if they believed the whole design would prove abortive ? Surely not, unless it were done to serve some *other* interest, such as a reputation for liberality, or of friendship to the gospel. Who would give a cent for that which he does not on any account value so much as half a cent ? But why should I stop to prove what every one believes ?

I say then, that the man, who from truly good principles, gives any thing to promote a mission, does it on the same general principle, on which the farmer risks his life, to kill the wolf. He sees the great enemy of souls, like a roaring lion coming to devour poor souls, led captive. He wishes their deliverance, because that is more pleasing to him than their captivity and destruction. He does precisely like the merchant. He exchanges his money for that, or the *prospect* of that, which he values *more*. He feels that the salvation of souls, will afford him more pleasure than he can expect to receive from any other application of his property. He sees a pearl of great price, and gives his trash in exchange for it, or at least casts this trash on the water, in the hope of receiving it in another, and more valuable form hereafter. Like the merchant, he sets his property on float, in the hope of rich returns. But to return.

How readily and feelingly do we sympathize with the farmer in his designs on the wolf, and how little do we sympathize with this friend of God ? We see, we feel, a good reason for all the exertions of the farmer, but none, or a very few for those of the latter. But why ? Our reason tells us that human lives are more important than those of sheep, and that the souls of men are inconceivably more important than their natural lives ? Why then are we not as much awakened by this thought as the other ? Our imagination hurries us away to the sheepfold. We feel all the danger the owner feels, and ere we are aware we lift an arm. But when we hear of our fellow men perishing for lack of vision, we coldly think it our *duty*, but feel no disposition to fly to lend an helping hand. What is the reason of this striking difference in our feelings ?

The answer is easy. We do not love and value human souls so much as we do the price of a few sheep. We put ourselves in the place of the farmer, and regard the sheep as our own. We value them as he does, and therefore enter into his feelings. But there

there is nothing in the case of the contributors to the Missionary Society to overturn any principle in our natures. We can therefore place ourselves in his stead. They are giving away what we value more for what we value less. This is cold encouragement. There is in it nothing to animate such hearts as ours. But let us once take an high interest in the *success of the gospel*, and value that success more than we do our property : Then shall we enter into the feelings of the benevolent donor, and like him exert ourselves.

Such are we, but such was not our Lord. He saw the forlorn state of man, in the paw of the lion, and sprang even into his jaws, to save the devoted victim. But why did he thus ? He loved the salvation of man, and its influence on the glory of his Father more than he did his own life. And therefore exchanged life for their salvation, just as the merchant parts with his money to double his enjoyment. This was the hope set before him, for which he despised the shame and endured the cross.

But if our Lord and master laid down his life to obtain what he loved better, what right have we to call ourselves *christians*, while we remain careless spectators of the ruin of souls by satan.

How difficult is it to become a christian indeed ! I can give money to the Missionary Society to secure the applause of men, or even in exchange for the favour and protection of God. How pleasing the thought of having an almighty friend ! But why ? Because he can give me all my heart's desire ? But will he do so ? Yes, if all my desire is that his kingdom may come, and his will be done. If the great object of my affection is the prosperity of the Redeemer's cause. Here I find the necessity of a new heart. An heart panting for the prosperity of Zion ; an heart prepared to rejoice in that prosperity *more* than in all other objects ; *more* than the men of the world rejoice when their corn and wine increase. To feel the operations of such an heart, where it is not, is indeed impossible.

If we valued the diffusion of divine light, and the salvation of our fellow men, as we do temporal things, how earnestly should we endeavour to promote them ? To obtain the perishing wealth of this world we lie awake on our bed, to contrive schemes, and sit up late and rise early, and eat the bread of carefulness to accomplish them. If we loved the salvation of men as much, we should be equally attentive to it ; think as much of it ; be as solicitous about it, and be as much engaged in it.

This is a mirror in which we may see and know ourselves, and discover whether we are in the faith. Only place this object fairly in view, and in contrast with our dearest earthly interests, and our hearts will *feel out* their own place and *take it*, and tell us *on what* they are supremely set. But let us not deceive ourselves.

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We may feel it to be important that we should exert ourselves in this cause ; not because if successful, our souls would rest in it as an inexhaustible source of pure delight, but because the omission may deprive us of the divine favour. If the latter be our motive, this prosperity would give us no pleasure should it be obtained ; nor can such mercenary views be acceptable to God. In this case, all our labour and pains will be entirely lost, to ourselves. But if we can look to the prosperity and blessedness of Christ's kingdom, and to the blessedness of God arising from his own benevolent purposes carried into effect, then shall we be completely happy when, hereafter, we shall see the whole family of the holy made infinitely happy, and the Lord God rejoicing over them as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE TRUE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

THE following excellent observations were sent by an eminent divine to a friend, in answer to the following *Question*, "What are the distinguishing properties of a *true spirit of prayer*?" *Answer*. To mention and enlarge upon every distinguishing property of a *true spirit of prayer*, will not now be attempted, and I trust will not be expected. This would be in effect to give the distinguishing marks of true religion, which is largely and excellently done by Mr. Edwards, in his book upon *Religious Affections*. They who carefully read and understand that book, cannot I think, be much at a loss with respect to the question before us.

However, I will take leave to suggest the following hints, which I hope will appear to be agreeable to truth, and may, perhaps, be not altogether unuseful.

1st. A true spirit of prayer is the holy spirit of God, dwelling in and influencing the hearts of God's children, *Rom. viii. 26* ; so it is a spirit of love and a sound mind. Love to God and man, in this it is as it were infinitely distinguished from every thing else.

2dly. A spirit of prayer implies in it a realizing belief that *God is*, and a sight and sense of heart, *what God is*. In true prayer *God is the object*, therefore a spirit of prayer is exercised in a *view of the object*. So far as a person has a true sight and sense of *God in his true character*, so far he has a *spirit of prayer* and no farther.

3dly.

3dly. A spirit of prayer is a spirit of *sensible, absolute dependence on God and trust in him*. Prayer, strictly speaking, is only an *expression* of our dependence on God. Therefore, where there is no actual sensible dependence on God, there is not a true spirit of prayer. Therefore, 4thly, A spirit of prayer is a spirit of *true humility*. The soul asks not only in a sense of *want and insufficiency*, but of *exceeding vileness and illdesert*: So hopes in and asks for *sovereign mercy only*, therefore, confession of sin is an inseparable attendant of *true prayer*, see *David, Daniel, Nehemiah, &c.*

5thly. From the foregoing particulars it follows that he who has a true spirit of prayer, *does not depend on his prayer*. This does not appear to him of any worth, but on the contrary, so imperfect and sinfully deficient, as on the whole to be matter of shame and self-condemnation. This distinguishes the *true saint*, from the most zealous, devout, blazing hypocrite, who *shines in his own eyes*. This leads me to say, 6thly, He who has a *true spirit of prayer* offers all in the name of Jesus Christ, in a sense and hearty approbation of his character as mediator, and in a view of *his worthiness*, trusting alone in his merit for acceptance.

7thly. A spirit of prayer is a spirit of true submission and obedience to God: *God is all and in all* to the praying christian, and it is unspeakably desirable and sweet to him to dedicate himself to *God and be all for him*.

8thly. 'Tis a humble resignation to, and *acquiescence in God* "not my will but thine be done," is the language of him who has set us the best pattern of prayer, when he was in the highest exercise of a spirit of prayer. 9thly, The *Holy Spirit* is the great good, and the sum and substance of all the christian most earnestly desires in the exercise of a spirit of prayer. See *Luke xi. 13*, compare with *Matth. vii. 11*. This is the living water, the water of life, which his soul thirsteth after. 10thly, A spirit of prayer is tender of God's honor, and seeks it in the first place, and *above all other things*, a spirit of prayer is an exercise of supreme love to God, therefore it seeks the advancement of his kingdom in the world. "hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, Father glorify thy name," is the language of a *true spirit of prayer*.

11thly. He who has a true spirit of prayer, naturally and earnestly prays for his *fellow men*. See *1 Tim. ii. 1*, because it is a spirit of love to men, especially will he pray for his fellow christians. See *Eph. vi. 18*.

12thly. He who has a spirit of prayer does heartily forgive his enemies and pray for them. *Matth. v. 44. Matth. vi. 12. Mark xiii. 11, 25.* 13th. He who has a spirit of prayer comes to the throne of grace with boldness and freedom, and pours out his heart before God, and unbosoms himself as it were, without restraint, *casting all his cares upon God*, and in this way the soul gets
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ease and sweet rest, 1 Sam. i. 15, 18. 14th. A spirit of prayer helps a person to fill his mouth with arguments, by which he wrestles with God, with inexpressible ardour and engagedness of mind. See Job xxiii. 4, 6.

Therefore 15th, he who prays in the spirit, has exercises, groanings and desires which are *inexpressible in words*, Rom. viii. 26. This is owing to the *greatness, and importance, and superlative excellency and wonderfulness* of the things, which are in view of the praying soul.

16th. A spirit of prayer is also a *thankful* spirit, therefore, they who are most disposed to pray, are most disposed to give thanks, and find the most matter of thankfulness. See Phil. iv. 6.

17th. When persons have a spirit of prayer they can pray with courage and earnestness at the darkest time, and when every thing in providence, and the circumstances of things in the world seems to make against the accomplishment of their desires, the reason is, persons in the exercise of a spirit of prayer, look above all these things, and put their *trust in the omnipotent, living God*. Thus prayed Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, 27, *Asa*, 1, Chron. xiv. 11, *Jehosha*. xx. 5, 12. *Hezek. 2 Kings* xix. 14, 19, *Neh. Daniel, Josiah, Nahum* i. 3, &c. &c. Indeed every person that has ever had a true spirit of prayer, has found himself in such circumstances, that he had none to trust to but God, and saw nothing but darkness and despair from every other quarter.

18th. A spirit of prayer is a persevering spirit, or he who has a spirit of prayer is disposed to persevere in prayer, and not give out, whatever discouragements there are in the appearance of things, and however far he is from discerning any appearance of success, or a favourable answer. *Matth. xv. 21, Luke xv. 1, Eph. vi. 18, Collos. iv. 2. 1 Thess. v. 17.*

All this and much more might be mentioned, as included in a *true spirit of prayer*, by which it is distinguished from every thing that is not. But it may be useful here, perhaps, to mention the following things: 1st, The spirit of prayer takes place in a much greater degree in some persons than in others, and the same christian may have much higher exercises of it at one time than another, and many times there may be so little of it in exercise, and so much to the *contrary* may appear, that a person may be ready to conclude he has nothing of it; but even then a true saint will have an evidence in his favour, however far he may be then from considering it as such, viz. a not being able to get any satisfaction or ease in any of the *externals*, that belong to prayer, but find a restless *emptiness*, which cannot be removed, but by the exercise of a spirit of prayer. It may be further observed, 2dly, A spirit of prayer is most commonly exercised with the greatest freedom in *secret*; and often takes place *suddenly and unexpectedly*.

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The mind is set at liberty *at once*, it hardly knows by what means, and gets into a *new world* as it were, and *exercises itself before God* with unspeakable vigour, strength of desire, and sweet enjoyment; but however suddenly such frames may commence, they will not go off so suddenly, if genuine, but the soul will be left in a *humble, calm, sweet* frame, with tenderness of conscience, fear, and hatred of sin, love to God and his ways, and courage and resolution in his service, &c. which were not so sensible, or to so great a degree before; 3dly, Though all the abovementioned particulars are included in a spirit of prayer, yet oftentimes but one thing may be most sensibly felt, and as it were, take up the *whole* attention of the mind. For instance, sometimes a person's *own concerns* may be most or altogether attended to, as the matter of prayer; sometimes some particular *friend or place*; sometimes the church and kingdom of Christ in the world; sometimes the heart may be most carried out in thanksgiving; sometimes in *adoration or confession*, to such a degree that there is little or no engagement in *petition*.

4thly, The exercise of *true grace* and a spirit of prayer are really *one and the same thing*, whenever the heart is in a right frame, it is in a praying frame, and has intercourse with God. This will dispose the christian to pray whenever and in whatever situation, company, or business, he is in, his heart will rise in silent ejaculations to God; and this will make him ready and forward to embrace all opportunities for secret and social prayer. 5thly, As God is wont to give all blessings (except the spirit of prayer itself) to his church and to particular persons in answer to prayer (*Ezek. 36, Matth. vii. 7,*) so before he bestows special and remarkable deliverances and mercies, he gives a spirit of extraordinary prayer for them; therefore, when such a spirit is found among any of God's people, and they are disposed to persevere in it, it is a most hopeful symptom that the good they are waiting for is at hand; and they who pray always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watch thereunto with all perseverance, *Eph. vi. 18,* have comfortable evidence of answers to their prayer. Though perhaps they may not come just in the way, and at the time they desire and hope for them.

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THE AFFECTIONS OF THE HEART.

WHAT do christians mean, when they complain of their *hearts*?

Ans. They conceive in what they call *themselves*, some permanent source of evil thoughts and affections. These seem to flow spontaneously like streams from their fountains. The same external occasions are followed by the same kind of thoughts and affections, which indicate that there is some fixed principle in their nature, to be excited in the same manner by the same occasions. These principles however, lie out of sight. Nothing of them is directly perceived, but their fruits. Whether therefore the principles are certain modifications of the spiritual substance called the soul, or whether all these exercises take place according to some laws of nature, without such a spiritual substance, is impossible for us to ascertain. But whichever of these theories be true, the effects are the same, equally regular, and equally to be expected in the same circumstances, and give occasion to the same conception, that we have in ourselves some general source whence all our thoughts and affections proceed. By experience, christians, in this imperfect state are led to conclude in the same manner that they expect the sun will rise tomorrow, that unless he who made them, shall be pleased to produce some alteration either in the qualities of their souls, or in the laws according to which their thoughts arise, they shall continue to sin as they have done, and that while they are endeavouring to drive sin out at one part, it will still enter at another.

They regard this something, whether it be some modification of the soul, or some laws of nature as a sort of inexhaustible source of wicked thoughts and affections; and in this view they contemplate it as the sum of all their sinfulness; and loath and hate it accordingly. They feel too, that the agreeable or disagreeable appearance, which objections make in their view is the occasion of all their subsequent affections, and of the volitions, which follow. And as the same objects appear differently to different minds, and produce effects answerably different, they necessarily impute this difference of appearance and effect to some differences in themselves; differences which occasions one to love what another hates. They see such signs of stability and uniformity in these differences, that they say it is the *nature* of this person

person to be pleased with such an object ; and of another, that it is his *nature* to be pleased with another object, and to be disgusted with that which pleased the former. The great object is therefore to have some such radical change wrought in the heart, that it may spontaneously be pleased with these objects, with which it is both duty and interest to be pleased, and pursue and value objects for the same reasons for which they are pursued and valued by him, who makes a right estimate of all things.

How would a person panting on the burning sands of Arabia, feel toward one spring, which should incessantly exhale a loathsome, pestiferous vapour, in comparison with one *passing* puff of the vapour ? And how very differently would he feel toward a good and durable spring of pure fresh water, and a single cup of the same ? The single, trifling, transitory effects in either case, would be as nothing in comparison with their respective fountains.

This similitude, though in a faint manner, illustrates the reason why the christian loathes his heart so much more than he does any one of its productions, and why he longs more ardently for a perfectly holy heart than he does for any individual exercise of holiness.

To know the plague of one's own heart, is to learn by an accurate and diligent attention to his exercises, the strong tendency there is in his nature to send forth the effluvia of moral pestilence. Having learned this, and his own insufficiency to counteract it, no wonder he cries out with Paul, " Who shall deliver me from the *body* of this death," from which so hateful a stench proceeds.

E——.

[The Printer solicits the readers of the Magazine to draw the veil of candor over the political extract inserted in page 332, which, through the multiplicity of business, he, by mistake, inserted instead of the following elegant delineation of a blind, but able disciple in the cause of Christ.]

THE BRITISH SPY.

I HAVE been, my dear S******, on an excursion through the countries which lie along the eastern side of the Blue Ridge. A general description of that country and its inhabitants may form the subject of a future letter. For the present, I must entertain you with an account of the most singular and interesting adventure which I met with in the course of the tour.

It

It was on Sunday as I travelled through the county of Orange, that my eye was caught by a cluster of horses tied near a ruinous old wooden house in the forest not far from the road side. Having frequently seen such objects before, in travelling through these States, I had no difficulty in understanding that this was a place of religious worship. Devotion alone should have stopped me to join in the duties of the congregation ; but I must confess that curiosity to hear the preacher of such a wilderness, was not the least of my motives. On entering, I was struck with his preternatural appearance. He was a tall and very spare old man ; his head, which was covered with a white linen cap, his shrivelled hands, and his voice, all shaking under the influence of a palsy, in a few moments ascertained to me that he was perfectly blind. The first emotions which touched my breast were those of mingled pity and veneration. But ah ! Sacred God ! How soon were all my feelings changed ! The lips of Plato were never more worthy a prognostic swarm of bees than were the lips of this holy man ! It was a day of the administration of the sacrament, and his subject, of course, was the passion of our Saviour. I had heard the subject handled a thousand times : I had thought it exhausted long ago. Little did I suppose that in the wild woods of America I was to meet with a man whose eloquence would give to this topic a new and sublimer pathos than I had ever before witnessed. As he descended from the pulpit to distribute the mystic symbol, there was a peculiar, a more than usual solemnity in his air and manner, which made my blood run cold and my whole frame to shiver. He then drew a picture of our Saviour ; his trial before Pilate ; his ascent up Calvary ; his crucifixion, and his death. I knew the whole history ; but never until then had I heard the circumstances so selected, so arranged, so coloured ! It was all new ; and I seemed to have heard it for the first time in my life. His enunciation was so deliberate, that his voice trembled on every syllable ; and every heart trembled in unison. His peculiar phrases had that force of description, that the original scene appeared to be at that moment acting before our eyes. We saw the very faces of the Jews ; the staring, frightful distortions of malice and rage. We saw the buffet ; my soul kindled with a flame of indignation, and my hands were involuntarily and convulsively clenched. But when he came to touch the patience, the forgiving meekness of our Saviour ; when he drew, to the life, his blessed eyes streaming in tears to heaven, his voice breathing to God a soft and gentle prayer of pardon on his enemies, " Father forgive them, for they know not what they do ;" the voice of the preacher, which had, all along, grown fainter and fainter, until his utterance being entirely obstructed by the force of his feelings, he raised his handkerchief to his eyes, and burst

burst into a loud and irrepressible flood of grief. The effect is inconceivable. The whole house resounded with the mingled groans and sobs and shrieks of the congregation. It was some time before the tumult had subsided so far as to permit him to proceed. Indeed, judging by the usual but fallacious standard of my own weakness, I began to be very uneasy for the situation of the preacher. For I could not conceive how he would be able to let his audience down from the height to which he had wound them, without impairing the solemnity and dignity of the subject, or perhaps shocking them by the abruptness of the fall. But, no ; the descent was as beautiful and sublime, as the elevation had been rapid and enthusiastic. The first sentence with which he broke the awful silence was a quotation from Rousseau : " Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ like a God !" I despair of giving you any idea of the effect produced by this short sentence, unless you could perfectly conceive the whole manner of the man, as well as the peculiar crisis in the discourse. Never before did I completely understand what Demosthenes means by having such stress on *delivery*.

You are to bring before you the venerable figure of the preacher ; his blindness, constantly recalling to your recollection old Homer, Ossian and Milton and associating with his performance, the melancholy grandeur of their geniuses, you are to imagine that you hear his slow, solemn, well accented enunciation, and his voice of affecting, trembling melody ; you are to remember the pitch of passion and enthusiasm to which the congregation were raised ; and then the few minutes of portentous, deathlike silence which reigned throughout the house ; the preacher removing his white handkerchief from his aged face (even yet wet from the recent torrent of his tears) and slowly stretching forth the palsied hand which holds it, begins the sentence, " Socrates died like a philosopher ;" and then pausing, raised his other, pressing them both, clasped together, with warmth and energy to his breast, lifting his " fightless balls" to heaven, and pouring his whole soul into his tremulous voice, " but Jesus Christ, like a God !" If he had been indeed and in truth an angel of light, the effect could scarcely have been more divine. Whatever I had been able to conceive the sublimity of Massillon, or the force of Bourdaloue, had fallen far short of the power which I feel from the delivery of this simple sentence, the blood which just before, had rushed in a torrent upon my brain, and in the violence and agony of my feeling had held my whole system in suspense, now ran back into my heart with a sensation which I cannot describe ; a kind of shuddering, delicious horror ! The paroxysm of blended pity and indignation, to which I had been transported, subsided in the deepest fell abasement, humility and adoration !

ation ! I had just been lacerated and dissolved by sympathy for our Saviour as a fellow creature ; but now, with fear and trembling, I adored him as—a “ God !”

If this description gives you the impression that this incomparable minister had any thing of shallow, theatrical trick in his manner, it does him great injustice. I have never seen in any other orator, such an union of simplicity and majesty. He has not a gesture, an attitude, an accent, to which he does not seem forced by the sentiment which he is expressing. His mind is too serious, too earnest, too solicitous, and, at the same time, dignified, to stoop to artifice. Although as far removed from ostentation as a man can be, yet it is clear from the train, the style and substance of his thoughts, that he is not only a very polite scholar, but a man of extensive and profound erudition. I was forcibly struck with a short, yet beautiful character which he drew of our learned and amiable countryman, Sir Robert Boyle : he spoke of him, as if “ his noble mind had, even before death, divested herself of all influence, from his frail tabernacle of flesh ;” and called him, in his peculiar emphatic and impressive manner, “ a pure intelligence, the link between men and angels !”

This man has been before my imagination almost ever since. A thousand times, as I rode along, I dropped the reins of my bridle, stretched forth my hand, and tried to imitate his quotation from Rousseau ; a thousand times I abandoned the attempt in despair, and felt persuaded that his peculiar manner and power arose from an energy of soul which nature could give, but which no human being could justly copy. In short, he seems to be altogether a being of a former age, or of a totally different nature from the rest of men.

As I recall at this moment several of his awfully striking attitudes, the chilling tide with which my blood begins to pour along my arteries, reminds me of the emotions produced by the first sight of Gray's introductory picture of his bard :

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Rob'd in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood ;
(Loose, his beard and hoary hair
Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air !)
And with a Poet's hand and Prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrow on his lyre.

Guess my surprise when, on my arrival at Richmond, and mentioning the name of this man, I found not one person who had ever before heard of JAMES WADDELL. Is it not strange that such a genius as this, so accomplished a scholar, so divine an orator, should be permitted to languish and die in obscurity, within eight miles of the metropolis of Virginia ?

RELIGIOUS

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

 ACCOUNT OF THE REFORMATION AT
 HOLLIS. BY REV. MR. SMITH.

[*Concluded from page 312.*]

TO prevent prolixity, and to exhibit to the reader as many instances of distinguishing grace as is compatible with the limits of this letter, I shall present, for candid perusal, the relations of several persons written by themselves, without making any remarks upon them.

I. I have always been opposed to the doctrines of divine decrees and personal election, and fought them as much as I could, until I was compelled to believe them. Some time ago, I heard a sermon upon them, which in part convinced me that they were true and important. My understanding more readily consented to them than before; but my feelings were opposed. Every imagination of the thoughts of my heart being only evil continually, I could not feel reconciled to these doctrines.

Since then I heard another sermon that pricked me to the heart, impressed my mind with some sense of guilt, and led me to inquire what I should do to be saved. But I was determined to conceal, as much as possible, my feelings, though I was in great distress for my soul. Preaching, instead of affording relief, only made my case appear worse. I continued sometime under painful sensations of mind. The more I attended to my heart, the worse it appeared, till I was gradually deprived of all hope of doing any thing myself to recommend me to God, or secure my salvation. I saw the purity of the divine law, and the justice of God in my condemnation. After remaining in this condition a short time, hating God and Christ without a cause, my mind was composed in the view of the character, and government of God. My feelings toward a preached gospel. The bible, the company and religious conversation of christians, are very different from what they ever were before. The doctrines of the gospel which have been so extremely offensive to me, now appear rational and lovely. I think I now prefer the company of christians to any other, and fervently desire to be more conformed to the will of God. But, at times, I have great darkness, and many doubtful apprehensions

hensions concerning myself, and am almost ready to conclude that I have never experienced the power of godliness on my heart. I find my heart doubtful above all things, and desperately wicked : yet at other times, I think I have animating discoveries of the beauty and excellency of religion, feel more resigned to the sovereign will of God, who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and hardeneth whom he will ; and my prevailing desire, I think, is, that God may be glorified whatever becomes of me. I realise the most absolute dependence on God, and know that if I am saved, it will be by free, unmerited sovereign grace, through the atoning blood of Christ.

II. I think I have abundant reason to bless God, for causing my birth and education in a gospel land, and for favouring me with divine truth and a preached gospel. But I ought to be humbled in the dust before God, for living so long unmindful of God, and the religion of Jesus Christ, for taking a part with the enemies of God, and for associating with the enemies of religion. And though I have endeavoured to lead a regular and morally honest life in the sight of men ; yet I have lived altogether without love to God, and that temper of heart which the gospel requires.

I have walked in the way of my corrupt rebellious heart, and have been wholly under the influence of selfish motives all my days ; and the God in whose hand my breath is, and before whom are all my ways, I have not glorified. Thus I have continued in sin and rebellion against the majesty of heaven, casting off fear and restraining prayer before God ; thinking I had nothing to do, because I was dependent on God for a change of heart ; under this strong delusion, I should have plunged into hell, if God had not have opened mine eyes to see myself. On seeing persons of my age, and of my particular associates, in great distress of mind, I was much alarmed at my own stupidity, and thought I was the most hardened sinner on the earth, being rationally convinced that I was without hope and without God in the world, and immediately exposed to misery, as much as they were. I then thought I really desired to repent, and become religious, but could not, and I wished to feel those keen sensations of mind which others expressed. I attended closely to reading, was fond of the company of christians and of religious conversation, constantly attended public worship, thought I was pleased with the dispensation of mercy to others, and rejoiced to see them expressing their confidence in Christ.

At length the enmity of my heart began to rise on seeing persons of every description taken, and myself passed by. I felt uneasy with the sovereignty of God, and began to fear that I should
neve

never be a subject of grace. I then found that all my imaginary love to religion, and to the followers of Christ, was wholly from selfish motives, with a hope of obtaining personal happiness. I saw that I was unwilling that God should do his pleasure, and have mercy on whom he will have mercy, unless I also partook of his grace. This reminded me of my guilty, helpless, dependent condition, that my salvation wholly depended on that sovereign mercy, which I despised. The moral state of my soul came more clearly to view, on that day, when a number of my nearest friends and acquaintances forsook me and the impenitent world, professedly to unite with the followers of Christ in the memorials of his death.* At the same time I knew that the offer of salvation was as freely made to me as to them, and that nothing prevented my compliance with the condition, but an unwillingness to receive it as a free gift. This was a painful scene to me, and I thought I realized, in a degree, the feelings expressed in these words: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you, yourselves, thrust out." But God was pleased, as I hope, soon after this, to remove this enmity of heart, and dispose me to submit to his sovereign will and government, and to realize to me his right to reign, and dispose of all things according to the counsel of his own will.

I now read his word with increasing delight, and viewed his perfections displayed in his works of creation, providence, and redemption, with approbation. And, though at times, I have many difficulties to encounter, respecting myself; yet knowing that Christ died to save such sinners as I am, and hath said, him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. I now desire sincerely to consecrate myself, and all I have to him, separate myself from the ungodly, and unite with the friends of truth, in obedience to all his commands, and attendance on all his ordinances.

III. Although I was born, and educated in a land blessed with the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, and lived the most part of my days, where this gospel has been clearly preached; and though I have believed the doctrines, peculiar to the Calvinistic scheme, to be bible doctrines, and have rationally approved of the most clear, and pungent preaching; yet until within about six months, I have never realized the opposition of my heart to God. Having lived and associated with those who I believed had experienced the power of godliness, I have heard much

* On the day referred to above, forty five persons offered themselves for admission into the church by exhibiting a written relation. His wife was one.

much conversation upon experimental religion, and the feelings of the human heart ; but conversation of this import, has to me, always been without meaning, and very painful. But within a few months I have seen much more of my heart, than I ever before saw. It has formerly appeared unaccountable to me, that any person living under the light of the gospel, should deny the being and perfections of God, or divine revelation. But of late I have seen by painful experience, that I was both an infidel, and atheist in heart. For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. The heart of a man must establish his character in the sight of the heart-searching God. And I know that I have not realized the essential presence of God, neither have I, in heart, believed the promises and threatenings contained in the holy scriptures. I have heretofore thought I fully believed the necessity of regeneration, and that nothing short of Almighty power could produce this change ; but I am now convinced, that I flattered myself, that when brought to the extremity, I should of myself repent, and do something that would move God to shew mercy to me, and on this I rested my hope. But when God was pleased to shew me my moral character and danger, I saw that I was so lately opposed to repentance, that if I was immediately to enter into eternity, I should not feel of myself, the least inclination to repent, for I was as much opposed to holiness as I was to misery.

I wished to escape misery and be happy, but not in the exercise of holiness. My own happiness was my ultimate object in all my conduct, and if the whole universe had been at my disposal, and had stood in competition with my own happiness, it must have perished.

I have often thought that I was glad to hear of the conversion of others, desiring that they might be happy if I were miserable ; but of late I have discovered feelings extremely different from these. Hearing that others have obtained a comfortable hope, has excited in me very painful sensations. And though my present knowledge of the human heart, is in my view, comparatively small, yet whoever has seen and felt what I have, will not, I believe, deny total, moral depravity, nor hope for salvation without a change of heart.

I think I have seen enough to convince me, that neither Arminianism, nor universalism, are according to truth, but that the only hope for perishing sinners, arises from the sovereign electing love of God. Some weeks past my mind has been freed from slavish fear, and I have felt in some degree, reconciled to divine sovereignty. Yet my feelings have not corresponded with those which I considered peculiar to christians. I once thought, that when a person had passed from death unto life, and hated what he once loved, and loved what he once hated, he must have clear evidence

evidence of this moral change ; and I have often queried, if this change be so great as is represented in the bible ? Why is it not more apparent in the lives of professors ? And here I find great difficulty in regard to myself. But what my real character is, at present, God alone knows. I fear lest I shall deceive myself, and ruin my soul, and reproach religion. But this I know, that religious company and conversation are much more agreeable than they ever were before. And as, in my opinion, the period is fast approaching when there will be a much more visible distinction between the friends and enemies of religion, than at present, I ask myself whether I am willing to join and take a part with infidels and open opposers to religion ? To which I think I reply in the words of Jacob, O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united. And to the real friends of godliness, if my heart does not deceive me, I can say, Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

IV. Early in my youth, it pleased God, by his Spirit, to call my attention to religion. But the allurements of the world gained upon my heart and my attention relaxed. I was convinced that the system of moral conduct contained in the bible was by far better calculated to promote public good and private happiness than any other system which had ever been formed. This belief had some effect on my external deportment ; but my heart remained at enmity against God. I viewed the excellency of that moral system as a striking proof that the bible is the word of God ; but did not feel the force of this truth on my heart. My morality aimed at temporal good and my *own future* happiness without any reference to the glory of Him who is all in all. Under repeated invitations of the gospel, and operations of the Spirit, I have resorted to various excuses and listened to the delusive hope of a more convenient season. But, within a few months past I think it has pleased God in some measure, to discover to me the plague of my heart ; that it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, that its natural state, being enmity against God, is incompatible with the enjoyment of him in the exercise of holiness. That a radical change was absolutely necessary ; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. That nothing short of a divine atonement could satisfy the demands of justice against me ; that an all-sufficient atonement had been made by the Son of God. But, that being unwilling to come to Christ for life, I was dependant on the Holy Spirit to bow my will, and by exciting me to exercise repentance, faith and new obedience, to lead me to Christ, who alone could obtain audience and acceptance

ance with the Father. Under these views, I hope I have been made willing to submit myself into the hands of God, to be disposed of for his glory. I have been led to hope that relying on the atonement, and intercession of Christ, by the assistance of the divine Spirit, I may take hold on the promises in the gospel. I feel it to be my duty, and think it is the desire of my heart, publicly to name the name of Christ, and conform to the ordinances of the gospel. Love to God appears to be that wisdom whose ways are pleasantness, and all his paths peace, more to be desired than all earthly good.

V. I desire to humble myself before God, for the long abuse of the means of grace with which I have been favoured. In heart, I lived in direct opposition to the best of beings, without realizing the exceedingly criminal part I was acting. Though my conscience often called so loud as to cause a considerable degree of uneasiness in my mind; yet I soon found means to silence its voice and continue in sin. And being unwilling to see my moral character in the clear light of divine truth, I was led to cavil against the most essential doctrines of the gospel, and laboured much to establish a hope in external morality.

Thus I continued, supporting myself in stupidity by vain excuses and cavillings against the gospel, and banished from my mind the solemn realities of death, judgment, and eternity; till it pleased God, the last spring, to shew me my lost and undone condition. I then saw that I had lived without hope, and without God in the world, exposed every moment to eternal ruin. The law of God, by which I stood a condemned criminal, appeared holy and righteous, and I justly sentenced to everlasting misery. In this unhappy condition, I trembled in a view of divine wrath? but felt no disposition to submit unconditionally to God. The idea that God was an absolute, holy sovereign, and would dispose of all his creatures in a sovereign manner, to promote his own glory, was peculiarly painful and cutting to my heart. I saw nothing in religion, nor in the character of God, that appeared lovely or desirable. My heart murmured against the divine government, and hated every thing of a holy nature. In this view of divine objects, which were so hateful to me, I wished for annihilation. A belief of this would have been very agreeable to me, but I knew that I must eternally exist, and I thought it more than probable I should for ever remain in enmity against God, and suffer the wait of divine wrath. For I knew that it was impossible for me to be happy without a change of heart, and I had no inclination to change my own heart, or to exercise holy affection. This taught me that I could do nothing to recommend myself to the favour of God, nor should I of myself

myself comply with the condition on which mercy was offered in the gospel. In this view of the criminal opposition of my heart to God, I realized my dependence on the sovereign grace of God displayed in the operation of his Spirit. Being deprived of almost every gleam of hope that I should ever be a subject of grace, borne down with a sense of guilt, my mind was relieved. My anxiety respecting my own happiness, and my sensible opposition to God, abated. I thought I rejoiced that God was an absolute sovereign, and that I could willingly submit myself into his hand unconditionally, to be disposed of for time and eternity, as should seem good in the sight of God. Sin appears odious wherever it is, and holiness desirable for what it is in its own nature. Religion and religious company, which were once offensive, are now desirable, and pleasant to me. And I think I can willingly deny myself, take up the cross, and follow Christ, whom I esteem the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

To the above I might add more than one hundred relations which I now have on hand ; in which the distinguishing grace of God is as clearly displayed as in these. They were not selected because they are more noticeable than others ; but because they are of the first characters in the town. So that it may not be said that none but ignorant, superstitious people are the apparent subjects of special grace. Two of these persons, whose cases have been mentioned, have received a public education ; and several others are of the most distinguished abilities, and the most influential among us. Whether they have, or have not, experienced the power of godliness on their hearts, God knoweth. But, saith Christ, ye shall know them by their fruits. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Hence that hope which is as an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, is maintained in no other way, but by a patient continuance in well doing, seeking for glory, and honor, and immortality, till the soul arrive to eternal life.

ELI SMITH.

December 15, 1803.

The

ORIGINAL LETTER.

The following is a genuine letter from a young lady of the age of fifteen years to her mother. Tuesday morn. March 24, 1801.

MY DEAR MAMMA,

LAST evening while I was writing, I felt such a sensation as I never before experienced. It was a sensation to which this proud heart of mine was before a stranger: I felt such an effusion of love to my Redeemer, such a lively sense of gratitude to him, such an ardent desire to receive his sacrament, such a heavenly joy, and such a wish and desire to devote my life to his service, that indeed I could scarcely breathe. My thoughts were, for a long time, entirely fixed upon my God. I wanted to tell S—— my joy; but I think I may truly say, my tongue refused to do its office, and clave to the roof of my mouth. These two lines were continually in my mind:

“For one blest hour at thy right hand,

“I’d give them all away.”

I could then, and can still say, “one hour spent in thy service, oh God, is better than a thousand spent elsewhere.”

Oh, my beloved mother, do help me to praise the Lord. Oh, praise him for his boundless goodness, and unmerited mercy to your poor daughter. I never before experienced such joy. I was truly happy, and seemed as if I were out of the body. Oh, what would I not have given to have gone out of this world of sorrow and trouble, this vale of tears, to meet my blessed Lord and master!

This morning I was greatly led out in the view of death. Looking at the burying ground over the way, my thoughts suddenly turned upon death. I was not at all dismayed at the thoughts of it. No, the world, and every thing in it, seemed as nothing; as unworthy my attention, in comparison with what I was going to obtain. But I can write no more. This will serve to give you some idea of what I have felt. And oh, my dearest Mamma, I do sincerely entreat your fervent prayers in my behalf, as well as those of my dear papa, that I may be enabled to persevere, and to press forward toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

When I reflected this morning about taking the sacrament, I thought my young friends would laugh at me, and make me feel disagreeably; then these words came into my mind, and were a great comfort to me.

“I am not ashamed to own my Lord,” &c. Then the temptation vanished. I could write more, but I can keep it from you no longer. Adieu.

ANECDOTE.

ANECDOTE.

A GENTLEMAN of some information was lately travelling through the Dutch settlements in the state of New York ; having called for lodging at a Dutch Inn, he sat as a stranger ought to, and heard the conversation that passed. It was not long before an old gentleman, who appeared very grave, began bitterly to lament the existence of the statute of the State, that prohibits the Dutch language being taught in schools. He mentioned a number of inconveniences and evils that would follow if the language should be done away among them. But the one which seemed to lie with the greatest weight on his mind was the following. He said that soon if this statute was kept in force, the Dutch children would not be able to speak the language, then said he, if our children should pray, the Almighty will not understand any thing they say.

QUERY. Would not missionary societies do well to let some of their Missionaries stop short, and labour among these poor ignorant creatures ? Their souls are as precious as the souls of the new settlers beyond them, or as the souls of the heathen ? And are mortals to be found so *profoundly* ignorant ?

POETRY.

A SINNER LAMENTING THE DELAY OF DIVINE GRACE.

LONG have I walk'd this dreary road,
Beset with darkness round ;
Nor seen nor heard a smiling God,
Nor one bright moment found.

Others, who once did join my speech,
And mourn'd in painful lay,
Now mounting up with rapture, stretch
To seize a heav'nly day.

Far left behind to feel my woe,
With harden'd heart to groan,
Each pray'r, each struggle sinks me low,
Each breath repeats my moan.

The lengthen'd day, the gloomy night,
Draw fast the bands of grief;
Sometimes despair o'erclouds my sight,
And says, there's no relief.

Then conscience thunders, Sinai flames,
I try again to rise;
The trial fails, and conscience blames
My pray'rs, my tears, my cries.

If hope perchance a moment gleams,
And says, Christ's blood was spilt;
My heart of sin beclouds the beams,
And seals my death and guilt.

'Tis thus perplex'd, forlorn, and lost,
I spend my weary days;
No Jesus comes, my hopes are cross'd,
While others sing and praise.

The Editors desire those who send their compositions for the Magazine, to add a title to them. The writers may be supposed the best judges.